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The USSR

REGIONAL AND POLITICAL ANALYSIS

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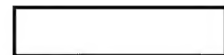
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Soviet Pressure To Permit Resumption of TU-95
Deployments to Conakry

The Soviet Union is reportedly exerting pressure on Guinea to allow resumption of TU-95 landings, curtailed this summer, at Conakry. The loss of Guinea as a base for the TU-95s weakens the Soviet capability to conduct long-range reconnaissance over Western and Soviet naval exercises in the Atlantic.

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The USSR and Guinea have for years pursued a policy of friendship and cooperation from which each has derived certain military benefits. Since gaining independence in 1958, Guinea has received some \$55 million in Soviet hardware. Moscow, in turn, has established an almost continuous naval presence in or near Conakry since 1970 projecting Soviet naval power into the waters near Angola.

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The US has pressed Guinea for over a year about the TU-95 deployments, stressing that they were impeding development of bilateral relations. President Toure, through a spokesman, assured the American Ambassador in August 1976 that the Soviet flights would end but requested a "security guarantee" against the alleged threat of attack from Guinean exiles. The flights continued, presumably because no such guarantee was made.

Subsequently, Prime Minister Beavogui visited Washington in June 1977 for the stated purpose of "improving relations" with the US. He reviewed Guinea's position on the Soviet TU-95 flights and stated that President Toure had decided not to allow them to land at Conakry anymore and had so informed the Soviet Ambassador in Conakry. President Toure emphasized his desire to strengthen bilateral relations with the US during a farewell call by the American Ambassador in July and reiterated his decision to end the TU-95 landings.

Nevertheless, two TU-95s landed at Conakry in August 1977, supposedly due to an "administrative error." President Toure explained to the US Charge that the authorization for the landings was an "error" and the functionary who had approved the landings had been suspended from duty. Toure seems to want to reassure the US that he is now serious about ending the TU-95 deployments.

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